

**DIXIE TRANSPORTATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (DTEC)**  
**MINUTES**  
**March 16, 2011**

**PRESENT**

Jim Eardley, Washington County Commission  
Jerry Lewis, UDOT Commissioner  
Chris Hart, Ivins City Mayor  
Dan McArthur, City of St. George Mayor  
Ken Sizemore, Five County AOG  
Myron Lee, Five County AOG  
Arthur LeBaron, Hurricane City  
Bruce Anderson, Santa Clara City  
Larry Bulloch, St. George City Public Works Director  
Roger Bundy, Washington City Council  
Curt Hutchings, Dixie MPO  
Rick Torgerson, UDOT  
Marreen Casper, Senator Hatch's Office  
Ellen Schunk, Senator Lee's Office  
Mike Empey, Rep. Matheson's Office  
Ron Whitehead, Washington County  
Daniel B. Kuhn, UDOT  
Walt Stein, UDOT  
Vern Keesler, InterPlan

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Eardley called the meeting to order at 12:05 pm.

**MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 16, 2011**

Commissioner Lewis corrected the reference in the February 16, 2011, minutes that indicated he was absent at the last meeting because he was attending a JHC meeting. He was, in fact, attending a Transportation Commission Meeting.

**MOTION: Motion by Roger Bundy to approve the Minutes of February 16, 2011, with the above correction. Motion seconded by Mayor Hart and carried by unanimous vote.**

**ACTION ITEMS**

A. Re-Program Northern Corridor Project

Chairman Eardley said that at the last meeting, a discussion was held concerning the

Great Northern Corridor (GNC), which would be routed through the Red Cliffs Desert Reserve as a relief for traffic congestion traveling east to west across the most populated areas of the County. The suggestion was made to place the GNC from Phase Three (2031-2040) of the Regional Transportation Plan to Phase One (2011-2020). Mr. Lee asked to have an analysis done through the CUBE consultants and revisit this item at this meeting. Mr. Lee passed out three handouts. As a result of the CUBE review, the project list that has emerged indicates traffic analysis of the year 2020 with the GNC included. In that scenario, traffic would be diverted from Bluff Street, River Road, St. George Blvd., up to Diagonal Street, and puts additional traffic onto Snow Canyon Parkway and the Washington Parkway on either end of the project and also adds a significant amount of traffic onto the western section of the Red Hills Parkway. Those would be the benefits of moving the GNC into Phase One.

In order to move the GNC into Phase One, it was necessary to move two projects down into Phase Two: The one on Indian Hills Drive and the one on 2000 South from Washington Fields Road to the Washington City limits. By making these switches, we come out forty million dollars (\$40,000,000) ahead. Both St. George City and Washington City have agreed that those projects could move back into Phase Two without significant impact.

Mr. Lee requested a motion from this committee to adopt the changes referred to above. In addition, on the new Projects & Phasing Chart, under Phase One, the third project down shows a GMC corridor study from MP 13 to SR-18 in the amount of two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000). There is currently a surplus in the I-15 MP 8 fund of \$250,000 programmed but unspent money. We would like to move fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) of that money into the planning budget and two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) into the GNC Study. This would parallel a similar planning process that the BLM is conducting with the HCP area.

Incidentally, the City of St. George has suggested naming the roadway the Great Northern Corridor; Washington County prefers the Northern Corridor. To avoid the confusion in the name, the MPO would like to re-name it Washington Parkway.

**MOTION:**     **Motion by Mayor Hart to: (1) Change the Priority of the Great Northern Corridor from Phase Three to Phase One of the Regional Transportation Plan; (2) Move Two Projects (Indian Hills Drive and 2000 South from Washington Fields Road to the Washington City limits) from Phase One to Phase Two; (3) Move Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) from the I-15 MP 8 Fund into the Planning Budget; and (4) Allocate Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000) to the GNC Study, pursuant to the discussion above. Motion seconded by**

**Councilman Bundy and carried by unanimous vote.**

The official name of the corridor will be considered at a later date and is not designated or changed by the previous motion.

Mr. LeBaron asked whether the alignment of the GNC is being considered by the BLM as part of its planning process, and Chairman Eardley responded that the Land Bill includes language that provides for the corridor with no identified route. The alignment indicated on the map does match one of the routes that the County has identified in its Master Transportation Plan.

The people on the east side of the County would like to have the support of the citizens on the west side for pursuing other transportation routes that are not just ATV routes. Mr. LeBaron also maintained that Hurricane should be a coordinating agency with the BLM on designating corridors.

**B. Move TIP Money from Washington Dam Road to Washington Fields Road for 2015**

Mr. Lee said there was a proposal by Washington City to reallocate some \$900,000 of 2015 money to Washington Fields Road from Washington Dam Road. This would allow Washington City to have one federally funded project instead of two and fund the Washington Dam Road project on its own dollar.

**MOTION: Motion by Councilman Roger Bundy to Re-Allocate \$900,000 of 2015 TIP money to the Washington Fields Road project from the Washington Dam Road project. Motion seconded by Mayor McArthur and carried by unanimous vote.**

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**A. Dixie Transportation Expo Critique**

Ken Sizemore said that about 450 people participated in the Expo this year, which is similar to last year's total. Most comments he heard were positive about the experience. Most comments about the Northern Corridor were favorable, with a ratio of about 10 to 1. His only suggestion for improvement was to place the Comment Board in a more prominent location.

**B. I-15 Coalition Update**

Mr. Lee distributed a handout prepared by the programming subcommittee of the I-15 Alliance Project, which now contains about 422 potential projects requiring prioritization. Washington County is not very well represented on this list. The group will meet in the next 3-4 weeks to develop a mid-term strategy for prioritizing these projects into Phases, as the MPO has done. The Alliance Committee's intent is to look at I-15 projects from California to Idaho, a spinoff of the anti-earmark movement in Congress right now. As we join together as 4 states (California, Arizona, Utah, and Nevada) on I-15 transportation issues, we will have a better chance to obtain funding. The goal is to develop mid-range and long-range initiatives.

### C. County Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordination Discussion

Chairman Eardley mentioned that at a current RPO meeting, a topic of discussion was the growing conflict between automobiles and bicycles. He introduced a booklet entitled "Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities, a Guide for Meeting the Needs of Bicyclists and Pedestrians," prepared by Dixie Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning (DBAPP) that had been distributed at that meeting. Copies of that pamphlet have since been mailed to all members attending today's meeting.

Sharing the road and obstruction of traffic are two major concerns. He asked for suggestions from the group concerning possible resolutions to this problem. There is a plethora of bicyclists out and about in the County nearly every day of the week, and especially on roads such as SR-18 and Old Highway 91, they seem to ride 3- or 4 abreast, with some disregard to the rights of motorists. As the price of energy continues to rise, we may see more and more bicycles on the road. Before a major accident occurs, it would be well to consider all options for preserving the two groups' rights and safety.

Mayor Hart expressed appreciation for the cycling groups around the County, and considers them a positive in the community. Promoting cycling will ultimately be beneficial to our area and conforms to the outdoor image we hope to portray to tourists. He would like to see the County sponsor a cycling coordinating committee, bringing the cycling group to the table to give input on solutions to problems such as safety, respect for vehicular traffic, etc. Mayor McArthur suggested painting designated bike lanes on the roads throughout St. George, because the streets are wide enough to accommodate those. He also said that some bicyclists travel so fast on the trails that they are dangerous to pedestrians. Roger Bundy said that certain community standards need to be established so that bicyclists know what type of behaviors are expected of them. Mayor Hart said that it doesn't take a lot of pavement to create a cycling lane; Chairman Eardley added that vehicles must, by law, give cyclists a berth of three feet.

Mr. Lee said that in the planning process, his group has met with cycling enthusiasts who had developed a vast network of bike trails throughout the MPO area. Additionally, the RPO had an ad hoc committee in its area. It became clear that any effective cycling organization would need to be under the auspices of either the County or a Council of Governments body, something bigger than this DTEC group or a similar body. Rather than the Washington County Commission addressing the problem, Chairman Eardley suggested that the Council of Governments (COG) seems more appropriate to deal with this issue on a countywide basis. There is no COG meeting currently scheduled, but when the next one occurs, this item will go on the agenda for consideration.

#### D. Presentation on Freight in Washington County

UDOT representatives Daniel Kuhn, Railroad & Freight Planner, and M. Walter Steinvorth, Planning Manager, were in attendance at the meeting. Mr. Kuhn narrated a PowerPoint presentation concerning the many ways in which geography affects freight movement in Utah. He emphasized the importance of freight considerations in transportation studies.

A copy of Mr. Kuhn's presentation may be obtained by contacting him at [dkuhn@utah.gov](mailto:dkuhn@utah.gov).

#### **UDOT/FHWA BUSINESS**

Rick Torgerson discussed emergency relief funding that has been requested for federal roads in Washington and Kane Counties. FHWA sent that request back east on March 3<sup>rd</sup> for approval. The total is around \$3 million in areas that included UDOT facilities, St. George facilities, Washington County facilities, and Washington City facilities. We hope to have an update on whether it will be accepted and funding allocated by next week's commission meeting. If it comes through, UDOT will be addressing all the concerns in all those communities for disaster relief as soon as possible. Right now, everything is on hold, waiting to see if the money is allocated or not. The Governor signed the disaster declaration on January 19<sup>th</sup> after the floods of December 2010. Inventory reports were done in February, and based on those reports, we are eligible for ER funding. Mr. Torgerson's understanding is that there is a pot of money available, which will be funneled to appropriate projects. Marreen Casper confirmed that there is appropriated money in the budget for these disaster relief projects.

Mr. Torgerson said that much of the damage is in 2 to 3 feet of sediment that washed into the rivers which created havoc with the hydraulic capacity. Chairman Eardley added that there is a substantial snowpack, which may create further difficulties if the weather turns warm quickly.

The Transportation Committee meets on Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, in the St. George City Council Chambers at 8:00 a.m. First will be a tour of the damaged areas, in which Dana Meier and Larry Bulloch will participate. Discussions concerning the Northern Corridor and other active projects will also occur. There will also be a tour of the new airport.

There is still a lot of work going on in the County:

- Finalizing the Hurricane/Main Street project
- Telegraph Road in Washington City
- 300 East is complete

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Ellen Schunk, representing Senator Mike Lee's Office, attended the DTEC meeting for the first time and was welcomed by the members. Chairman Eardley asked the other congressional aides (Mike Empey, Rep. Matheson; and Marreen Hatch, Senator Hatch) whether they had any information from Washington, D.C., to offer to the group. Ms. Casper read an email from her office, as follows:

There are lots of cuts happening across the board right now in the CR. DOT wasn't hit too hard, except for the Federal Railroad Safety Technology account was "zeroed out." Congress will be looking at a Transportation bill soon. Finance Committee will be holding a hearing in April. We know there are a lot of needs but we can't support an increase in the gas tax right now. Fuel prices are too high for us to be making them even higher with an increased gas tax.

Additionally, Mr. Empey said that if there are any FEMA questions, people can call him and he will obtain answers through the congressional liaison.

### **NEXT MEETING**

A. April 20, 2011

Having no other business, Chairman Eardley adjourned the meeting at 1:16 p.m.